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artificia, ingenia et instrumenta ad scribendum artificialiter in litera latina". Other details follow. There are two alphabets in steel letters, two iron forms and one iron vise, forty-eight forms in base metal. (See Abbé Requin, *L'Imprimerie à Avignon en 1444*, Paris, 1890, and his *Les Origines de l'Imprimerie en France*, Paris, 1891.) The "art of writing artificially" is certainly the art of printing. Waiving the vexed question as to whether Waldfoghel was indebted to Gutenberg or his co-laborers, it remains an interesting question what bearing, if any, these new Provençal documents with their tantalizing allusion to "lettres moulées" (no. 708-709) have upon the history of the discovery of printing. Apparently the editor is unacquainted with the work of the Abbé Requin, else he could hardly have failed to have attached a greater importance to these documents than he has done.

JAMES WESTFALL THOMPSON.

Tableaux de Dépréciation du Papier-Monnaie. Réédités avec une Introduction par PIERRE CARON. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale. 1909. Pp. lxxxv, 458.)

THIS is a reprint of the official tables of the depreciation of the paper money issued in France during the Revolution, first printed early in 1798 and again in 1825. Both these early prints are extremely rare.

To this reprint of the tables, M. Caron has written an introduction of great value, and one which all future students of the assignats will have to consult. He has limited himself in the first and most notable part of the introduction to a careful study of the various laws enacted by the Convention and by the Directory determining the discharge in depreciated paper of contracts between individuals. This is a subject which has hitherto scarcely been touched by historians.

The first attempt to correct the situation created by the depreciation of the assignats was brought about by the necessities of the government, following the repeal of the maximum laws. The assignats were then depreciated ninety per cent. The government received them at par, though it was compelled to pay for its supplies in specie. The consequence was, M. Caron tells us, that "as depreciation continued public receipts diminished, while expenditures increased." The law of June 21, 1795, put an end to this situation and saved the government from bankruptcy. The next step was to take up the status of debts between individuals. Debtors were defrauding their creditors every day by forcing them to accept assignats at their face value for debts contracted months or years before in specie, or in assignats at a much higher rate. Laws were now passed to regulate payment of debts so contracted. In 1795 there was such legislation on June 21, July 13, and December 3; in 1796 on April 4, July 17 and 23; in 1797 on February 3, June 23, August 31, September 1, and December 1; in 1798 on January 5, February 1, April 24 and 25, May 10, June 27, and August 14. This virtually closed the series of laws relating to the discharge of private debts,

though a law of May 6, 1799, touched the subject slightly, and the Council of Five Hundred had the matter of a complete revision of the various laws before it when its sessions were terminated by Bonaparte.

M. Caron's study shows clearly the immense difficulty the government was under in enacting any satisfactory legislation to meet the situation. Some of the earlier laws were hastily passed, and in some cases only for a short period in order to meet an emergency, as for example the laws suspending the payments of debts. Laws like these made confusion worse confounded. The law of December 3, 1795, Caron says, "incommoded business" and "paralyzed commerce". Again, when the mandats were created, the legislators thought that they were through with their difficulties. Mandats were as good as specie, they asserted, and therefore it was sufficient to enact that all debts should be paid in mandats or in specie. After their long experience with paper money, they were so simple as to believe that the mandats would not depreciate. Less than a month disabused them of this confidence, and they saw themselves compelled to begin all over again.

The second division of M. Caron's introduction is devoted to the law which decreed the compilation of the tables here reprinted. This law was passed June 23, 1797. M. Caron considers the provisions of the law, the manner in which the tables were drawn up, and the results as to their accuracy. The central authorities of each department, assisted by fifteen business men, drew up the tables. They were made out to cover the dates from January 1, 1791, to July 17, 1796. The authorities of the departments were to determine the depreciation of the paper money for each month in that period by using a table of such depreciation made up by the Treasury at Paris, comparing this with any such table as the department might have kept, and with the prices of real estate, food, and merchandise at each of the several dates. The task was extremely difficult. In some cases the statistics on which the calculation was to be made could not be secured; again, in regard to certain dates, the department of the Aube, and presumably other departments as well, fixed a figure for the depreciation arbitrarily. The resulting tables naturally show an enormous variation in the value of assignats in the various departments at the same date. Indeed the tables do not pretend to show more than an approximation to the actual depreciation, a fact which must be remembered by students who undertake to make use of them.

RALPH C. H. CATTERALL.

Napoléon et la Catalogne, 1808-1814. La Captivité de Barcelone (Février 1808-Janvier 1810). Par PIERRE CONARD, Ancien Élève de l'École Normale Supérieure, Docteur ès Lettres. [Bibliothèque de la Fondation Thiers, Fascicule XVIII.] (Paris: Félix Alcan. 1909. Pp. xliv, 474.)